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IN THE CIRCUS—PAINTING BY RENOIR
IN POTTER PALMER COLLECTION

of great importance in the American art museum. The Art Institute of Chicago through its many gifts and loans of French paintings now affords admirable opportunities for knowing at first hand the versatility of French painting of the nineteenth century and the richness of its contribution to art. Enough time has now elapsed since the acquisition of French paintings was the fashion for opinions and valuations to become crystallized and for each painter to be recognized for his real worth. Cazin and Dagnan-Bouveret, for example, were more in favor than were Monet and the impressionists at the time the Potter Palmers were making their collection, but the tonalists were afterward neglected when the impressionists came into their own. Now, the spiritual qualities in the work of these two painters are recognized, and even though their goal was different from that of the impressionists, they have taken their place among the French immortals.

Considering the Potter Palmer Collection in the light of the other French collections at the Institute, it is particularly valuable for its impressionist group. As the Potter Palmers acquired their canvases by the impressionist painters when this group was still unpopular, they had the opportunity of securing some unusually fine works. Of particular interest are the early examples, which reveal less familiar aspects of the genius of the impressionists. Among these is Manet's "La sortie du port de Boulogne," which was painted about 1868, and Monet's "Argenteuil," dated 1868. These were done at the time that the famous group known as the *Ecole des Batignolles* were just beginning to paint out-of-doors and used to meet in the *Café Guerbois* to discuss the subject. Whistler's "Gray and silver; Battersea Beach, 1863" proves the close connection of this painter with the French school in his early period. Courbet and Manet were unmistakably his models here. Manet's race course picture parallels Degas in subject matter and technique; Monet's "Argenteuil" is like a Manet; and Renoir's marine is quite *Monetesque*.

Space does not permit at present of an exhaustive discussion of the collection. In addition to the impressionist group, the romanticists and the Barbizon men, who represented the high water mark of painting in the early part of the century, are to be studied here from superb examples, as well as the men at the end of the century, such as Cazin, Besnard, and Puvis de Chavannes who may be considered the precursors of twentieth century ideas.

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

ON April 15 was opened the Second International Exhibition of Water Colors. The display includes 376 paintings by artists from thirteen different nations, the works of each nation being grouped to-

gether. The following countries are represented; America, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Holland, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Norway, Russia, and Sweden. Individual rooms are given to the Martin A. Ryerson collection of water colors by Winslow Homer and to the Desmond FitzGerald collection of Macknights.

The purpose of this exhibition, as stated in the foreword to the catalogue, is "to reaffirm to the art world the importance of this many-sided medium, and to show its contemporary development." Water color has suffered at the hands of amateurs, and the great importance given to oil painting since the time of the Renaissance has relegated it to a place of comparative insignificance.

Though the possibilities of water color have only begun to be realized by the modern artist, this medium of artistic expression has been employed since the time of the early Egyptians. The foreword to the catalogue traces its various uses through the history of art. But the exhibition itself furnishes many evidences of its heritage from the past. The illustrations of Kay Neilson recall its use by the early miniaturists, a painting by James McBey suggests the methods of the old masters in their use of it for sketches and drawings, while Maxwell Armfield in his portraits follows the early Italian use of tempera. The water colors of Hiroshige, included to show the pure Oriental tradition, hang side by side with those of Take Sato, which reveal the effect of Western influence on Eastern ideas.

But water color as now used by the majority of painters is the result of the modern movement of impressionism. The English school under the leadership of such men as Russell Flint, Charles John Collings, and Gerald Moira, and the American school, if such we may claim to have, headed by Winslow Homer, John S. Sargent, and Dodge Macknight trace their ancestry to Turner, the great impressionist in



BALLET GIRLS—PASTEL BY DEGAS
IN POTTER PALMER COLLECTION

aquarelle. It has been quite fittingly said that Turner made water color the enchanted garden of modern impressionism. What those who have discovered the garden have achieved is the outcome of their own individual temperaments colored by national characteristics. It is the consideration of these two things, individuality, as expressed through technical methods and as the result of national traditions, that makes this exhibition so interesting to both the layman and the artist. Techniques of all kinds are found; and the differences between the English, French, German, American, Oriental, and Scandinavian schools may be carefully analyzed in spite of the inter-play of cosmopolitanism.

During the same period as the water color exhibition there is also being shown the annual exhibition of the Chicago Camera Club, a display of paintings of Tahiti by Jerome Blum, and an exhibition by animal painters and sculptors. The Chicago Camera Club is an organi-



NOTRE DAME DE PARIS—PAINTING BY J. F.
RAFFAELLI IN POTTER PALMER COLLECTION

zation made up of business men who have been interested in photography as a medium of artistic expression and a stepping stone to the appreciation of the other arts.

In connection with their exhibition are shown twenty photogravures of the work of David O. Hill made by J. Craig Annan of Glasgow and presented to the Institute by George H. High. David O. Hill, called the father of modern pictorial photography, was a Scotch painter who more than sixty years ago became interested in photography as a means of recording characters for a large historical painting. Though he was forced to use the tedious process of the calotype and he indulged in photography for only three years, 1844-47, his work has exceptional artistic qualities which have never been surpassed.

The paintings made in Tahiti by Jerome Blum, a former Chicago painter, present a phase of modernism, which in accord with its policy the Art Institute presents to its patrons as an expression of contemporary painting. In his landscapes and portraits of the natives of

Tahiti, this artist has given us his interpretation of a land which has held many writers and artists under its spell, most conspicuous of whom in the field of art has been the French artist Gauguin.

The exhibition of the Society of Animal Painters and Sculptors, suggests the appeal of this theme to the artist. Charles Livingston Bull seems to be attracted to animals for their decorative qualities, while sculptors like Roth and Harvey delight in seiz-

ing their significant attitudes. To Volkert the spotted cow is the center of interest in a sunny farm land scene.

LIBRARY NOTES

TWO large purchases recently received from abroad by the Burnham Library have strengthened its collection of works on the architecture of the France and England. Of fundamental worth are the *Catalogue of the churches, royal palaces, hospitals, and public edifices built by Sir Christopher Wren, 1724*; *Designs of Inigo Jones and William Kent, 1744*; two works by J. F. Blondel, *De la distribution des maisons de plaisance, 1737-8*, and *Cours d'architecture, 1774-7*; and the *Oeuvres* of Antoine LePautre of the Louis XIV period. Forty-three volumes comprise the additions on the French Renaissance.

Helen Gardner has resigned as Head of the Photograph and Lantern Slide Department of the Library to devote her entire time to the development of the history of art courses in the School. Margaret Jackson has been appointed to fill this vacancy.